

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for treating a bone condition, comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of preptin, preptin analog, or a preptin-agonist peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the amino acid sequence of preptin is SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[3]] 1, wherein the fragment is amino acid residues 17-34 of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[5]] 1, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.
7. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[5]] 1, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.
8. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[5]] 1, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 14 conservative amino acid substitutions.

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 10 conservative amino acid substitutions.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 6 conservative amino acid substitutions.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

13. (Currently amended) A method for increasing or maintaining bone density, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of preptin, preptin analog, or a preptin-agonist peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the amino acid sequence of preptin is SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[15]] 13, wherein the fragment is amino acid residues 17-34 of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[17]] 13, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

19. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[17]] 13, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[17]] 13, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 14 conservative amino acid substitutions.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 10 conservative amino acid substitutions.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 6 conservative amino acid substitutions.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

25. (Currently amended) A method for stimulating osteoblast growth or modulating osteoblast apoptosis, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of preptin, preptin analog, or a preptin-agonist peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the amino acid sequence of preptin is SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[27]] 25, wherein the fragment is amino acid residues 17-34 of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[29]] 25, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[29]] 25, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

32. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[29]] 25, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

33. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[19]] 25, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 14 conservative amino acid substitutions.

34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 10 conservative amino acid substitutions.

35. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 6 conservative amino acid substitutions.

36. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the preptin-agonist peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

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Serial No. : 10/523,617
Filed : January 6, 2006
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Attorney's Docket No.: 11752-010US1/SRR505248-003

37-52. (Cancelled)